

## Introduction to the Southwest Santa Fe Community Area Master Plan

### The Master Planning Process through Neighborhood Planning

Once City and County planning staff agreed that the approach for developing the master plan would be through neighborhood plans, neighborhood areas needed to be created out of the greater whole. Working with the original members of the Southwest Planning Area Steering Group, City and County staff divided the entire planning area into seven distinct neighborhood-planning areas. These groupings of neighborhoods were derived according to some unifying character, natural feature or relating theme. The areas had to remain geographically small enough to function as a neighborhood unit, but large enough to keep the number of neighborhood areas manageable.

Each neighborhood plan was to be developed within four planning worksessions totaling 28-neighborhood workshops. The process began in June of 2001 and was completed in December of that year.<sup>1</sup> All together, over 50 public participation forums, including meetings, workshops, presentations and public hearings have been conducted since June of 2000, the date the Southwest Area Master Planning Initiative public participation process began. There are also more public forums to follow before the work is complete.

Participation in the neighborhood planning workshops included property owners, neighborhood associations, business interests, and other concerned parties. Over 6,000 notices/agendas were mailed in accordance with County property owner appraisal records in addition to neighborhood associations, steering group members/interested parties and apartment/mobile home park management companies. Participation ranged anywhere from 5 to 40+ people at any given workshop, but the average attendance was usually between 8 and 15 people per meeting. It is estimated that over 140 people participated in the plan development process over the course of seven months.

The workshops<sup>2</sup> were conducted using scenario-building techniques. Workshop #1 focused on defining and understanding what made up their neighborhood; what were the concerns, issues and strengths. Staff also asked the participants what was it that furthered their own quality of life, where did people interact, where were the activity centers or neighborhood cores. The first workshop also served as an opportunity to familiarize the group with the principles and development design elements contained within the *Final Report*.

The second workshop verified the existing land uses. It was important to clearly understand how the land was being used so that a corresponding land use designation was appropriately assigned. Several of the land uses in the Southwest Area were new and unique, so the planning groups worked to define new categories

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<sup>1</sup> One final workshop has yet to be completed—the final Agua Fria THC worksession.

<sup>2</sup> The Agua Fria THC did not follow the workshop schedule since their process was unique. See that Chapter 2, Section 7 for more details on their tailored process.

that would accurately describe their properties. The groups also worked to identify development patterns. Areas of differing urban and rural patterns were delineating, including vacant lands.

The third session began the scenario construction process. The focus was to identify areas of potential future development and/or areas that might be considered for rural protection. Participants looked at a variety of choices for neighborhood development pattern areas<sup>3</sup> and selected a series of alternatives that they considered the best future patterns. In several cases, the planning groups actually suggested modified or “interactive” land use control systems that they felt better satisfied the desired goals of the neighborhood.

The last workshop reconstructed the future neighborhood pattern selections from the previous session and then applied future land uses to those areas. In addition, future land uses were either applied to 1) undesignated areas or to 2) reevaluated future designations of the City’s General Plan, based on the existing land use patterns and densities derived in Worksession #2. After examining a series of land use scenarios, the group, by consensus, selected the patterns and uses that they felt most accurately expressed their ideals of what their neighborhood should look like in the future.

Once the future land uses were complete, they were then reassembled into a single-composite, future land use plan (see Chapter 3, Section 1). In addition, each neighborhood process has been translated into individual neighborhood plans, making up the most important component of this master plan. Finally, the completed future land use plan allowed the planning and transportation/traffic engineering staff to derive conceptual transportation<sup>4</sup> and pedestrian connections and circulation patterns that would allow future neighborhoods to be connected within and among themselves. Future population, housing units and water demand estimates were also derived based on the future land uses.

To complete the planning process, a draft master plan will be distributed to the neighborhood planning groups at a final workshop (of all the groups together). Suggested modifications will be considered by group consensus and incorporated. The final draft of the master plan will then be circulated for public comment and review. When that process is complete, it is anticipated that formal public consideration will then be conducted<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> “Future neighborhood pattern models or areas” are the equivalent of “typology areas” as described within the *SW Area Final Report*.

<sup>4</sup> This process does not alter or amend the adopted ARTF Future Roads Plan. Suggested transportation connections are at the collector to local street levels only.

<sup>5</sup> The noted exception to this process is the Cerrillos Road Corridor Plan Area. Because of pending development, the City Council considered and adopted the Cerrillos Road Corridor Plan and corresponding City General Plan amendments in November of 2001. That section has been reincorporated into the larger master plan.